

LO! THE MOB MELODIOUS.

THE SEASON OF MUSIC LETS LOOSE TO-MORROW.

Singers of Old Songs and Older Operas. Pianists, Violinists and Conductors. What a Season! There May Be a Few More Who Are Not Nearly a Million.

Whether it shall be that the musical season opens to-morrow night with the production of André Messager's "Véronique" remains for to-morrow night to demonstrate. The proof of an opera's success is in the box office, not in the record of two years of prosperity in England. In the matter of critical opinion as to musical creations or the interpretation thereof there is an exquisite adjustment of equality between London and New York. American musicians who have never appeared in London or Vienna or some other radiating center of European art activity clamor in vain at the doors of London newspapers with their "American press notices."

"We never pay the slightest attention to what the American papers say," solemnly says the learned Briton.

In precisely the same style the American critic heaves a long sigh when he is asked to turn his glance upon the smug paragon of conventional phrase and stereotyped opinion which passes current as musical criticism in the metropolis of the world. In London the critical sanction flows with milk and honey. The blustering breath of discriminative analysis never blights the hopes of the mediocre reciter of songs or the automatic smiler of pianos. Upon the portals of art hangs a crimson banner blazoned with the cheering legend: "All here bring with ye, ye who enter here."

Across the sea the critics sit in the mountains the splendor of this banner gleams upon the eyes of the nations. The oppressed and the downtrodden of the musical sphere, the failure and the charlatan of Italy, of Spain, of Germany, of America, lurking in the last ditch of resource and drinking the drops of its gutter, rise up in new encouragement and take ship for Albion's bright shores.

There the great concerted puff shall hold a fretful realm at gaze.

And the kindly critic shall slumber, lapt in universal praise.

It is but a few short days since the newspapers on this side of the Atlantic teemed with accounts of the success of certain American performers in London. With the exception of one, all these performers had achieved signal failures in this country. These failures were not because of comparative weakness, but because of an almost total want of any feature of merit.

In several cases not a single newspaper writer in this town has been able to find a thing to praise. Yet these same cases had pronounced success with the London critics and thereby were enabled to secure engagements to sing in public halls and in the private salons of the rich.

Is the prophet always without honor in his own land? Can no American succeed here without the aid of Europe? Not at all.

Those who are competent get praise and plenty of it. Those who are incompetent get condemnation here and praise in England. It is pleasant to adduce the testimony of one of the recent visitors to Britain, an honest and sincere person, who may yet reach an enviable position.

This musician when congratulated by the present writer on her success in London said with a rather tired smile:

"Yes, we all succeed over there. They don't write criticism; they write perfunctory notices, and no one is condemned."

One of the successes of the London season was an American soprano who possesses a really pretty little voice, but who is entirely without knowledge of the art of song.

She sings like a child, without intelligence or insight. She was very popular with the London public, who are so easily deceived by the British critics her American critics, and they would have declined to read them if she had attempted to do so.

Now the British critics do not visit America. Far be it from them to do anything so enlightening. The American critics, on the contrary, do go to London. When they are there they visit the London musical entertainments, from the slowest opera at Covent Garden to the rampant evening of the British critics her American critics, and they would have declined to read them if she had attempted to do so.

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as exciting as the life of Miss Schumann.

Link

This visiting conductor practices his fair to grow pensive. Walter Damrosch, who is a much better conductor than some of these gentry who cross with some and make a vast roster of their penny notes in various interests, is to be visited by Felix Weingartner, who is certainly worth visiting. Wilhelm Gericke, the suave Prussian, an elegantist of cultivated symphonies in the scholastic city of Boston, is to be visited by Vincent D'Indy, a French composer, who has written much, but who may or may not be a good conductor, even of his own works. The New York Philharmonic Society, however, leads the way in continuing its policy of engaging none but visiting conductors.

Of course, all this is in line with the trend of the time toward the worship of men and their personalities. Europe watches the changing expression of the Kaiser's face. America shouts itself hoarse over Theodore Roosevelt. New York finds its own bright particular Roosevelt in Jerome K. Jerome, so that the humbler musical world is devoted to the worship of personalities.

It is an unhealthy condition. Let this not be misunderstood. The interpretative artist is a sine qua non in music. To the mass of us music is a sealed book till the interpreter opens it. We are grateful to him, and that is entirely right. But we have come to place the effect before the cause, we are raising the interpreter above the creator.

Mr. D'Albert sets forth in his advertisements that he is the greatest Beethoven reader in the world. We flock to hear his playing of the sonatas and depart exclaiming: "How wonderful! What a genius!" All our praise is for D'Albert. Poor old Beethoven, he wrote the sonatas, but these, like the poor, we always have with us, while D'Albert must come and go at the will of piano makers, and we must be glad when we are permitted to reap benefits from the latest endeavor to boom a hammer clavier.

The fiddler assails Brahms or twiddles Viennese, and again we are lost in admiration at the performer. As for the opera, that is all to the glory of the singers. The composers are but private secretaries, who write the music, which these spellbinders may enthrall audiences. Now, this thing has found its way into the orchestral field, and instead of going to hear the symphonies of Beethoven, we go to hear Mr. Weingartner's readings of them, which, with all esteem for that admired conductor, are not always the same thing.

It is a pity that public attention should be so distracted from the true issues in the world of music. Doubtless this centralization of thought on the mannerisms of individual performers has much to do with the barrenness of the time in creative art. That subtle magnetism which reacts from the people upon the originating musician is almost undiscoverable, but it surely exists. To be a successful composer in this day a man must have something of the advertising spirit in his soul. He must be willing to prance and pose before the public eye. He must attitude in art and wave the yellow banner of freedom before the nations. If there is a Brahms or a Beethoven working in this poster era of art he is buried beneath the surface and will come up only after a lengthy submersion, and because he is of the buoyant sort. He is apart from the turmoil and the jingle of the music mart.

Watching with averted eyes, the drawing of the hour when the present unsettled conditions will simmer down into something like sanity. But this is only a repetition of what has already been better said by Felix Weingartner in his pithy little book "The Symphony Since Beethoven."

"Everywhere we notice a pulsating, restless activity, an uncertain groping after disordered objects, a hankering for success and celebrity at all costs and by any means. 'Progress,' 'Neo-Germanism,' 'literary unheard-of originality,' 'precursor,' 'epigone,' 'eclectic,' 'founder of a new school,' 'superstition standpoint'—these are many of the catchwords which strike our confused ears. Now we hear of a new tone poem in comparison with what the works of Wagner, Liszt and Berlioz are but the productions of pygmyism; there the popular vein is said to have been rediscovered. As in a Fata Morgana, the new pass before us, fade, and die away. An almost frivolous admiration of the wilful, the irregular, the ugly, has manifested itself in many places. . . . No doubt in the midst of all the confusion the great, the truly new, and original is silently preparing but far away from the art market."

When this crisis of the present musical era before us we shall look down before it, even as we bowed before the creations of Wagner. Even to this day the singer has not succeeded in obliterating himself entirely before the glory of Wagner. When Mr. Corried ravished Bayreuth of his Rhinegold and welded "Parsifal" into a ring of world power in the new continent, it was before the dawn of the present musical era.

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of D'Indy and Bruckner are tracking paths among the underbrush with Wagner's axe.

In the nursery of Time there sleep some where a babe who shall come to build the House Beautiful in that cleared wilderness. Meanwhile we have the immortal prophesy of music still with us. Let us go together to hear the solemn readings.

W. J. HERRMANN.

MARIE HALL, VIOLINIST.

The English girl who is to be heard here during the coming season.

The infant prodigy seems to be a musical impossibility in this country, and it is probable that the results of Frank van Veeney's visit here will deter managers from taking risks with youthful performers for some time to come. He was the most famous kid in Europe, but helped David and Charles Frohman to lose about \$50,000. He was sent to prove how slight is the interest of American audiences in what Germans call a "wonder."

With a performer of an age approximating maturity the case is different. Jan Kubelick, who was not a child, made a great success here. So did Joan Girard.

Both Marie Hall and Otis Chew, who are coming here this winter, have also reached the age which will make them interesting as personalities. Both are English, and they are the most interesting women violinists of the day.

Marie Hall was the daughter of Edward Felix Hall, a harpist who, with his wife, came to New York to town picking up a precarious living. She was born at Newcastle, April 8, 1884.

Her father had her to play the violin. At the age of 9 she first appeared at Newcastle Town Hall creating such a sensation that some wealthy Newcastle gentlemen invited her to London and in 1894, later Max Mosse, principal professor of the violin in the Midland Institute School of Music at Birmingham, was called upon to proceed with her. He then recommended her to the Birmingham School of Music, which she entered, and was elected to the studentship and held it for two years.

The father was enabled to take his daughter to London to Wilhelm, who after hearing her play the Mendelssohn Concerto and Grieg Sonata, requested the father to leave the child with him. Mary followed in the house of Wilhelm.

Finally, the father having agreed to leave his daughter in charge of others for three years, she was taken to London and in 1897 she continued her violin studies. In 1901 she was sent to Prague, where for eighteen months she studied under the care of Prof. Smetana.

At a coming out concert her programme consisted of the Tchaikowski concerto in D, an adagio by Vieuxtemps, and Paganini's "Moto Perpetuo." She was recalled thirty times.

In the beginning of the same year she was taken to Vienna for a series of concerts, where she met with success. On February 16, 1903, she gave her first concert in St. James's Hall, London. Her programme consisted of the Tchaikowski concerto in D and the Wieniawski "Kauf." Her second concert took place in the same hall two weeks later, again with orchestra, and she played the Ernst concerto in F sharp minor, Bach's Chaconne, Paganini's "Moto Perpetuo," and the concerto with orchestra by Beethoven, with Herr Galston at the piano. The audience crowded the building to overflowing, and the concert was a decided success.

On the second appearance of a girl of 19.

NOTES OF MUSIC EVENTS.

The soloist at the first concert of the Boston Symphony Orchestra in Carnegie Hall on Thursday evening, November 9, will be Heinrich Karg, pianist, and the soloist at the second concert, which will be the Dvorak concerto. The soloist at the Saturday afternoon concert will be Miss Gaskill and Elton van Hous, which means that the programme will be of the highest quality.

Karl Grunauer, violinist, and Marguerite Hall, contralto, will give a concert in Mendelssohn Hall on Thursday evening, November 23.

Oleg Samarin, pianist, will give a recital in Mendelssohn Hall on Thursday afternoon, November 9, at 3 o'clock.

Minnie Conson, pianist, will give a concert in Carnegie Hall on Thursday evening, November 9, with the aid of Walter Damrosch and the New York Symphony Orchestra. Her principal number will be the Beethoven G major concerto.

Gwylm Miles will give a song recital at Mendelssohn Hall Tuesday evening, November 14. He will sing songs by Hugo Wolf, Schubert, Tchaikowski, and others.

Miss Lisa Bredt, the highly talented pianist from Chicago, who has been studying for the past few years with Alexander Lambert, will give a concert with the assistance of the New York Symphony Orchestra, Walter Damrosch, conductor, at Mendelssohn Hall on Saturday evening, November 18, at 8:15.

The date of the concert by the Philadelphia Orchestra, under the leadership of Dr. Scher, will be given at Carnegie Hall, with Miss Olga Samarin, the pianist, as soloist, has been changed from November 6 to December 11. This change is in accordance with the state of the world up to the date of publication, and can tell offhand who won the football games and to an eighth how every stock closed on the New York Exchange.